



## **How To Do Business with the California Exposition & State Fair**

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Cal Expo Web Page: [www.calexpo.com](http://www.calexpo.com)

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CALEXPO  
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## **How to Do Business with Cal Expo**

Thank you for your interest in Cal Expo. We are always on the lookout for exciting new products to offer our fairgoers during the California State Fair. This booklet was designed to give prospective vendors like you a “sneak preview” of what doing business with Cal Expo is all about.

As you may know, the State Fair has been providing Californians with the highest quality food, products and fun for more than 150 years. In other words, we’ve got quite a reputation to live up to. Our fairgoers expect the “Best of the Best” and that’s exactly what we deliver. By always featuring commercial vendors and concessionaires who possess these same high standards, we ensure an exceptional fair year after year.

Again, we look forward to the possibility of working with you to provide our fairgoers with an innovative and fun experience. Should you have any questions about Cal Expo or the application process, please don’t hesitate to call.

Sincerely,  
CALIFORNIA EXPOSITION & STATE FAIR

Norb Bartosik  
General Manager/CEO

Kathleen Nakase  
Chairman of the Board

## **LIFE AT THE FAIR**

The California State Fair lasts for 16 fun-filled days from August 17 to September 3, with the first two Mondays dark. It boasts hundreds of exhibitors and concessionaires, high-caliber entertainment, endless displays of livestock, crafts, animals and agriculture, thrilling rides and loads of activities for the whole family. It's an exciting time of year and we're excited that you'd like to be a part of it.

Before you apply for space at the Fair, there are a few things you should know. While the Fair is fun, that doesn't mean it's easy. Putting on a 16-day event takes the tireless dedication and hard work of many, including our commercial exhibitors and concessionaires. It also requires that everyone follow the same guidelines, which are outlined in detail in the *Commercial & Concessions Rules and Regulations Handbook (Handbook)*. You can find this Handbook on our State Fair web site at [www.bigfun.org](http://www.bigfun.org).

## **WHO ARE YOU ANYWAY?**

A commercial exhibitor is someone who sells a product, ride or service at the Fair. For example, if you sell jewelry, give massages or sell anything of any kind you are considered a commercial exhibitor. On the other hand, if you sell food and beverages then you are a concessionaire.

## **BASIC GUIDELINES**

The main thing you should know is that Cal Expo does expect a lot from its commercial and concessions vendors. However, we also give a lot in return. Our commitment to customer service is bar none. You simply won't find a team more attentive and responsive than the one we have here. Below are a few basic guidelines that everyone is expected to follow. Knowing what to expect in advance can make a big difference in how successful you'll be at the Fair. While most of the guidelines apply to both commercial exhibitors and concessionaires, there are a few differences. For the sake of brevity, we're just giving you an overview here. If you'd like more information about any of these guidelines, see the *Handbook*.

## **Hours of Operation**

First and foremost, if the Fair is open for business then you're open for business. Please take these hours into consideration when contemplating your staffing needs.

Tuesday -Thursday	12:00 PM - 10:00 PM Fair closes at 11:00 PM
Friday – Sunday and Labor Day	10:00 AM - 10:00 PM Midway closes at midnight
First two Mondays	Closed (dark)

Some food and beverage operations may choose to open a few hours earlier each day to serve livestock workers and other early arrivals.

## **Insurance & Workers Compensation**

Everyone needs to show proof of General Liability insurance including Product Liability in the amount of \$2,000,000. Each concessionaire/exhibitor who hires employees must also provide a copy of worker's compensation insurance certificate.

## **Looking Good**

If you've been to the Fair you know that all the booths and stands are designed and presented in a professional, aesthetically pleasing way. And it's not just because we're picky, it's because fairgoers will naturally be attracted to the booths and stands that appeal to them. Since we want you to be a smashing success it only makes sense that your stand look as good as possible. There are several guidelines detailed in the *Handbook* that you will need to follow. For instance, we require that all signage be professionally created and that your stand have an overall appearance of quality and cleanliness.

## **Tents**

If you are an exhibitor, any tents or canopies you use must be approved by us before installation. "Pop-up" and "E-Z up" tents are not allowed. We have a tent contractor and can assist you if needed.

If you are a food concessionaire, tents are not allowed.

## **Food Stands**

Because the Fair runs for 16 days, the Health Department requires a permanent structure such as a trailer or a booth. It's almost like having your own "mini-restaurant" for the duration of the Fair.

Professional food stands feature:

- Bright lights
- Pleasing use of color
- Professional signage
- Back yard screening'
- Skirting and awnings
- Multiple points of sale
- ADA compliance
- Compliance with Health Department requirements

Professional food stands are similar to any permanent restaurant, and must include:

- Three compartment sinks
- Hot water
- Refrigeration
- Completely enclosed exterior
- Climate controlled interior
- Fire protection
- Approved indoor fryers and cookers
- Fountain drink equipment

## **Paperwork and More Paperwork**

When working with governing agencies like the Health Department and the Board of Equalization there can be a fair amount of paperwork involved. All vendors, commercial and concessions, must obtain and provide a current resale permit. It will be up to you to be sure you have all the appropriate forms and certificates completed prior to Opening Day. Don't worry, we provide a handy timeline and checklist in the Handbook, and we're always available to answer questions regarding anything you don't understand.

## **Health Department**

Cal Expo cares deeply about public health. As such, all concessionaires are required to follow all Health Department guidelines, including being Food Safety Certified and pay safe food handling fees. Anyone handing out samples of food will need to pay the appropriate safe food handling fee and provide product liability insurance.

## **Coca-Cola**

Coca-Cola is the official soft drink and bottled water sponsor for Cal Expo. No other soft drink or bottled water products are permitted to be sold, sampled or given away on Cal Expo property at any time.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

Following are a few things we take into consideration when reviewing your application for space at the Fair.

### **Product Diversity**

Obviously, we can't have everyone at the Fair selling the same thing. Bringing us something new and exciting will make us, and our fairgoers, very happy.

### **Product Demand**

Make sure that what you are proposing is something consumers want. The more they want it, the more they'll buy it and the more successful you will be.

### **Product Quantity**

Do you have enough product to meet the demand of a fair that attracts over one million visitors over 16 days?

### **Track Record**

Tell us about other successful operations you've run at festivals or fairs. "Been there done that" can go a long way in proving you're ready for the State Fair.

### **The Fun Factor**

Is your booth or stand a fun place to be? If your booth is informational or educational, make it a fun learning experience. Show us how interactive it is and how enticing it will be to fairgoers.

## THE RENT FACTOR

How much does it cost for you to have a booth or stand at the Fair?

Bldgs. A, B & D	Commercial Exhibitor	10x10 corner	\$3,870 includes 500W electric per 10x10 area
Bldgs. A, B & D	Commercial Exhibitor	10x10 inline	\$3,120 includes 500W electric per 10x10 area
Bldg. C	Commercial Exhibitor	10x10 corner	\$4,040 includes 500W electric per 10x10 area
Bldg. C	Commercial Exhibitor	10x10 inline	\$3,290 includes 500W electric per 10x10 area
Concessionaire			\$2,000 deposit against 24% of gross sales
Outdoor Commercial Exhibitor			\$23 per square foot plus flat fee of \$180 for 20 amp service per 10x10 area

## APPLICATION

Because most of our exhibitors and concessionaires return year after year there is limited space available and the competition can be tough. Please don't let this deter you.

If you are just starting your operation and feel you can meet all the requirements, but might need a little help, please don't let this keep you from applying. We are always happy to work hand-in-hand with our commercial and concessions vendors and will gladly answer any questions you have, give advice and provide referrals for things like merchandising and equipment rentals.

To apply, you will need to fill out the application and return it to us along with your current California Seller's Permit, a recent picture of your booth and a product list with prices.

The application can be found on our State Fair web site at [www.bigfun.org](http://www.bigfun.org).

## OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Cal Expo hosts hundreds of events each year, which often include commercial exhibits and concessions. To see which events might be right for you, visit [www.calexpo.com](http://www.calexpo.com) and check out our calendar of events. In most cases, commercial exhibitors will work directly with the organizer of the event and food concessionaires will work with Cal Expo's exclusive caterer, Ovations, who can be reached at 916-920-1212.

Cal Expo also enters into hundreds of contracts annually to support every aspect of the State Fair as well as the maintenance, development and rental of the property during the rest of the year. The California State Contracts Register lists all state contracts open for bid at [www.dgs.ca.gov](http://www.dgs.ca.gov). Please direct questions about Cal Expo contracts for services to the contracts Office at 916-263-4042.

Cal Expo also contracts for purchases of items such as office and paper products, printing, hardware, mechanical and motor vehicle parts, and paint and lumber. Certified Small Businesses and Disabled Veteran Business enterprises are actively supported by Cal Expo. If you have any questions about Cal Expo contracts for purchases, please call the Business Services Office at 916-263-3027.

If you have any questions about the application and selection process, please do not hesitate to call. You can find the Rules and Regulations Handbook and all other needed forms on our State Fair web site at [www.bigfun.org](http://www.bigfun.org), or you can request a copy if you do not have access to the internet.

Again, thank you for your interest in Cal Expo. We look forward to being of service.